

Oral history with 74 year old white male, Mesa County City, Colorado. (Transcription)

Begin M10 A (2)

CAL SURVEY OF AMERICAN DIALECTS CASSETTE C 19 This next excerpt is taken from original tape W 19.

INTERVIEWER I: Is there some question that you would like to ask

INTERVIEWER II: (inaudible) ... the Ellis Island. And the Bunkers. How they treated you. What happened then?

INFORMANT: Very good. Very good. They give us the biggest steak I never seen in my life. And one big potato on the side. That a, I think the drink was coffee and water. I was so hungry for that steak and that potato.

INT I: After those beets, I'd think so.

INF: Yes. And I think I sec, I skipped the coffee. I couldn't drink coffee after a meal. I drink water and a big steak and fruit and bread, and all that stuff, you know. But we was big tables, you know, loaded with immigrants. But they was very good.

INT I: Who provided the meal?

Library of Congress

INF: Well, it must be United States government because...

INT I: A welcoming ...

INF: Yeah, a welcoming.

INT II: (unintelligible)

INF: (unintelligible) But, we had a beautiful shower rooms. We shave and clean-up and shower rooms, you know, very nice, very

C 19 page two

clean, everything. And after I got through with inspections in there, one American man, he took me New York central, to the (unintelligible). And I guess they saw our papers, and where I was going, in Utah, all that, and they put me on the right train, to come to West. The only problem, I didn't have no necktie, I couldn't get it in the, on the trains I knew from. That's the only problem I had.

INT I: That's one thing they forgot to tell you.

INF: Yeah.

INT II: You came here to, to herd sheep?

Library of Congress

INF: Yes.

INT II: To herd sheep.

INF: Yeah. We, we had, the only way they let us come to the United States is to work with the sheep. So I work five years for somebody else, with the (unintelligible), not with the company, and then after five years, three guys got together, we put money together, and we start buying our own sheep and our own land. Right after five years, I couldn't speak very good English yet, very good, but we made it alright.

INT I: But, you never seemed to harbor a resentment that the Basque people could only come in for one occupation, whereas other nationalities could take any job.

INF: Any job. Yeah. That's one thing ...

INT I: But you never, you didn't let that hold you back.

INF: No. Oh no. I was determined. I knew United States was very rich country. If I go over there, I going make money.

C 19 page 3

And I think what I try to, anything, to start, you know. Yes, I, didn't matter for me. In fact, I like it. There's, in 1925, 1930, this Western Slope was beautiful--lots of deer, rabbits, and wild chickens, you know. Oh, it was most beautiful thing!

Library of Congress

INT I: Did you hunt a lot?

INF: Yes. Yeah, I love hunt and fish. And trap coyotes, mountain lions. And if I saw some tracks in the snow or anywhere, next day or so, I had it in my little trap. It usually was there!

INT I: Did you ever use bow and arrow to hunt with?

INF: No. No, in Basque country, we didn't have bow and arrow. But, I was a very sharp, very sharpshooter, I was trained in the in the Army. And just for instance, one time I was working for the Overton, I saw coyote coming up a little draw. And I hide myself behind the bushes. And there was a little lake, and he was coming there to drink water. Tongue sticking out, he was coming right in the water hole. I waited long enough, and I hit him right between the eyes with the 30/30. And to hit coyote like that, you got to be pretty damn sharp, I'm telling you. Mr. Robert, he was very glad. We had a lot of losses, you know.

INT I: I was going to ask you if you had a lot of losses.

INF: A lot of losses, yeah.

INT I: From coyotes.

INF: Oh yeah. Lot of losses.

INT I: And at that time you could only shoot them. They didn't put out any of this poison.

Library of Congress

INF: No. Those days, that thing, there was no thing they could

C 19 page 4

eat, no poison at all. And we trap them. And I caught a lot of them trapping. And you have to learn how to make the scent to fool them, you know. It's, it's a very artistic system because coyotes are very, very smart.

INT II: <gap> did you ever know <gap> A painter, and artist who used to ...

INF: No, I never metted him. I saw his paintings, and I admire his work, a wonderful work. But I never met him.

INT II: You know, his sister lives here. She lives here. <gap> who used to be on the (unintelligible) police department...

INF: Yes, I know him.

INT II: ... his wife is <gap> was <gap> sister. <gap> Dorothy.

INF: Oh, yeah.

INT I: She shared a tape of us, of her sister, who was an early-day school teacher, 1916 on Lake Park.

Library of Congress

INF: Yeah. Cold Creek over there.

INT I: And it was the Road Creek School.

INT II: Road Creek?

INT I: Road Creek.

INT II: Road Creek, yeah.

INT I: No, no, that's not. Road Canyon School.

INF: Road Canyon School, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

INT I: Which of course is no longer standing.

INT II: There was a canyon up there at Painted Mesa that

C 19 page 5

used to paint. Over on, what was that man's name down at (unintelligible)? The music, we've all danced to it...

INF: Oh, it wasn't

Library of Congress

INT I: <gap> has property down there.

INT II: <gap> yeah, <gap> It was

INF: Oh yeah. When I came, <gap> was the father of <gap> he had two thousand goats, two thousand goats up at Lake Park. Lot of goats!

INT II: Oh yes, I remember that.

INT I: I never knew that.

INF: Oh yeah. They ...

INT II: Nobody likes them.

INF: No, nobody likes them. We came from Price, Utah with 6000 sheep, three herds, 2000 each. And the boss, I was, told me, "You watch very good. Don't mix with those goats out there." So I herd them day and night, the sheep, so we don't mix them with those goats, you know. Then finally, the old man died and fortunately he put sheep instead of goats.

INT: Oh. That was probably one of the largest herds of goats that was ever had in here.

INF: Out here, ever, yeah. But we used to get lots of rain, lots of snow those days. And vegetation was beautiful here. Lots of flowers on the desert here, you know. All over here.

Library of Congress

Redland, there was no (unintelligible). We stayed away to 6000 sheep in Redland, I don't know how long. There was no home,

C 19 page 6

nothing that we, just come down the river, and water sheep, and just let it go back. It was an old wooden bridge. On the main street.

INT I: That'd be in the late 1920's.

INF: Late 1920's.

INT II: I'd like to have you back to our house. He probably remembers the hill.

INT I: Probably had some sheep up there where our house is sitting.

INF: Yeah, oh yeah. Yeah, we had someday. Well, some day we go out on the Redlands out there, you know, and the hills are all (unintelligible). And I tried to locate where we camped in there, you know. But now the people they build homes and all (unintelligible).

INT II: Sure.

INT I: Have you always lived in Grand Junction, Mrs.Urrutuy?

INF II: Yes.

Library of Congress

INT I: Did you and <gap> meet in Grand Junction?

INF II: Yes.

INT I: Must have been at a dance

INF I: No, when we met it was Lincoln Park. They had one those (unintelligible--Basque language) Russian mountains and ...

INF II: Circus, I guess it was.

INT I: Carnival?

INF II: Carnival.

INF I: Carnival, yeah.

END OF SIDE A

C 19 page 6

CASSETTE NO. C 19 SIDE B We continue with this excerpt from original tape W 19.

INF II: Circus I guess it was.

Library of Congress

INT I: Carnival?

INF II: Carnival.

INF I: Carnival.

INT I: All the various rides to go on?

INF I: Yeah.

INT I: Do you have things like that in Europe? Did you have?

INF I: Yes, we have those things. So I came from (unintelligible) I hadn't been in town a long time, and I heard a lot of commotion up in Lincoln Park. So I went out there-and I want to ride those things, you know.

INT I: Sure!

INF I: So, I go out there, I find two girls. This one, another girl, on the (unintelligible).

INT I: Ferris wheel.

INF I: Yeah, wheel there. And I couldn't hardly speak English, very little. I asked one girl, "You like to go like that?" And she says, "Yes." So I took her up, and when we come down she says, "How come you didn't ask me?". "Well, it's your turn now, do you want to go?".

Library of Congress

INT I: Good for you! So you've been on the merry-go-round ever since, eh?

C 19 page 7

INF I: Well, we went around then, that thing broke. It stopped. And we was way up on top, upside down.

INT I: Oh, do you think he planned that?

INF II: I think so.

INT I: How much did you pay that man to get that to stop?

INF I: Well, I think, I think that when he knew I was green- horn way out the country ...

INT I: He'd get by with it!

INT II: Did you know

INF I: I think I met him once

INT II: (unintelligible)

INF I: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I met him, but I forgot what he looked like and all that, you know.

Library of Congress

INF II: (inaudible)

INT I: Oh, this is ...

INT II: Did you know

INT I: Oh, this is beautiful.

INF I: Yeah, yeah I know him.

INT II: He's a nice guy.

INF I: We sold him, we bought a (unintelligible--2 conversations going on at once)

INT I: Oh, this book is Basque. And it's in your native language isn't it?

INF I: Yeah, I don't know what that is.

INT I: But they have these designs like you have on your chest over there.

INF I: Yeah, they got the designs there, you'll see.

C 19 page 8

Library of Congress

INT I: And <gap> showed me that here's the kitchen, where they cook in the fireplace.

INF I: Yeah, in the fireplace. My mother, she ate like that.

INT I: Now, most of the furniture looks to have been hand-made.

INF I: Yeah, oh everything hand-made.

INT I: Out of heavy oak.

INF I: Yeah, all oak.

INT I: Beautiful.

INT II: Oak?

INF I: Oak, mm hmm. There's a lot of oak over there.

INT I: What is this? Just an ornament, or ...

INF I: That, let me see, I have to look there. Oh yeah.

INT I: I got a picture.

Library of Congress

INF I: (unintelligible--possibly Basque)

INT I: It isn't anything you stamp to make a design, is it?

INF I: Yeah, to make design on the cake or whatever it is, you know.

INT I: Okay. And then, this is the blacksmiths working.

INF I: That's a blacksmith's shop, yeah.

INT I: That must have been a very large shop for you as an apprentice.

INF I: Yeah. Yeah, it was a, and we was in a shop just like that you know. And welding, sand-blasting, and welding. <gap> Very, very primitive system.

INF II: That's one of the oldest places where ...

INF I: There was a, I noticed a jai alai court in Spain and